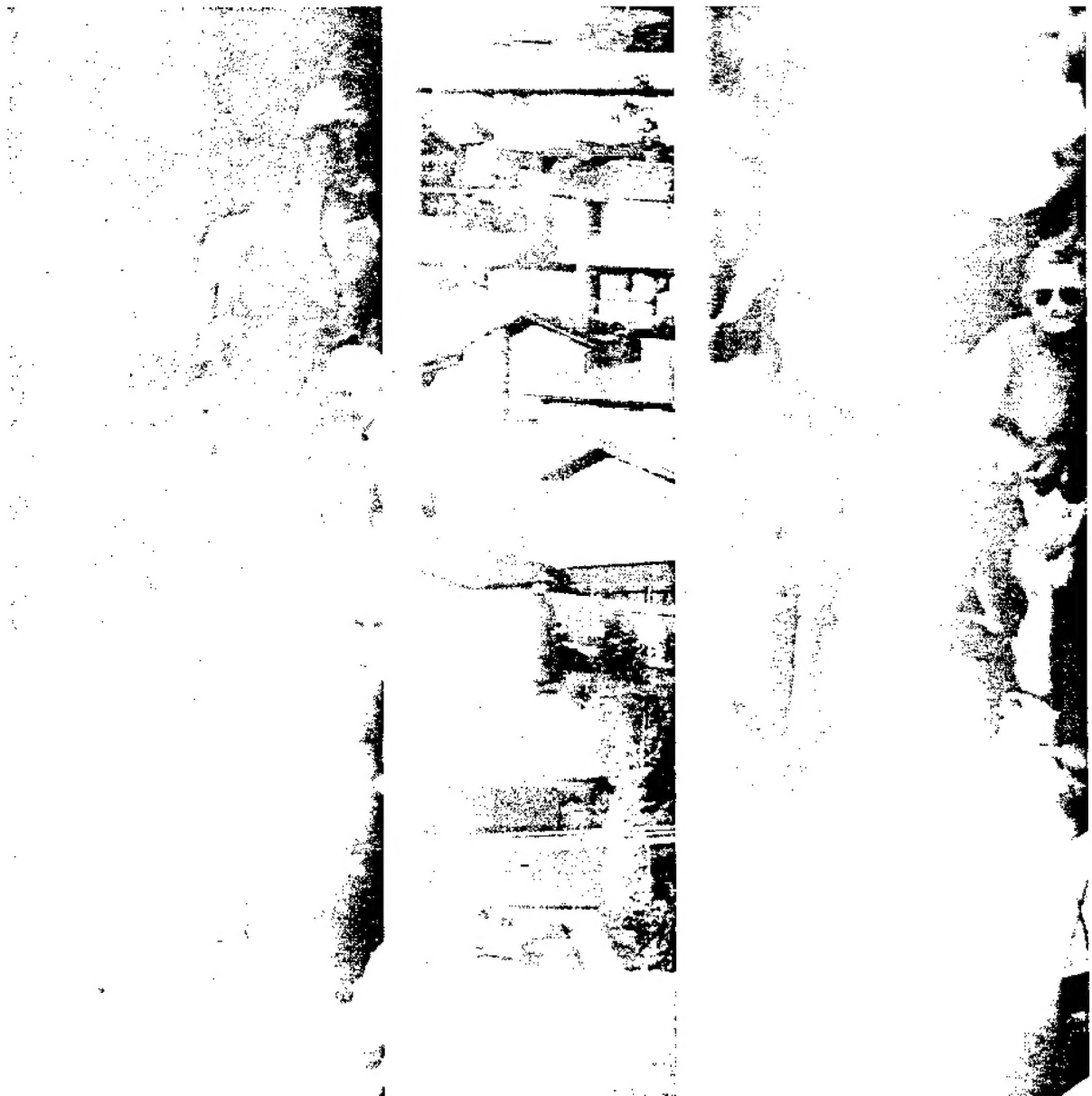




1996 CENSUS OF POPULATION & HOUSING:

# NATURE AND CONTENT OF THE CENSUS





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NEW ISSUE

**1996 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:  
NATURE AND CONTENT  
OF THE CENSUS**

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### INQUIRIES

- For further information about other ABS statistics and services, please refer to the back of this publication.
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Objective of the Census

Australia's next Census of Population and Housing will be held in 1996. The first Census was held in 1911 and since 1961 a Census has been taken every 5 years, a frequency which is specified in the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

The objective of the Census is to measure accurately the number and key characteristics of people in Australia on Census night, and the dwellings in which they live. This provides a reliable basis for the estimation of the population of each of the States and local government areas primarily for electoral purposes and the distribution of government funds. It also provides the characteristics of the population and its housing within small geographic areas and for small population groups to support the planning, administration, policy development and evaluation activities of governments and other users.

Under the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution the 'number of members (in the House of Representatives) chosen in the several States shall be in proportion to the respective numbers of their people'. Population estimates based on the Census are used to determine the number of seats allocated to each State in the House of Representatives. Population estimates are also used in the allocation of Financial Assistance Grants by the Commonwealth to the States and the Territories. In 1992-93 these grants accounted for 12.7% of total Commonwealth Budget outlays. The population estimates of local government areas based on the Census are a key element in the criteria used for the distribution of funds.

The Census also provides important information on the characteristics of the population. While this is valuable in its own right it is also possible to relate one characteristic with other characteristics so any relationships that exist between them can be identified. For example, relationships between the localities in which people born overseas were living at Census date, the employment status of these people, the main occupations and industries they worked in, and their educational qualifications can be studied. As another example, those planning transport facilities can study the main traffic flows within a city and the methods people use to get to work, relating these data to average income levels and the availability of motor vehicles to households.

- While some information on some characteristics is available from other sources, only a Census can provide the information on a standard basis for the country as a whole and for small geographic areas and small population groups.

### User Consultation

In February 1993, ABS published an Information Paper *"1996 Census of Population and Housing: ABS Views on Content and Procedures (2007.0)"*. This document was despatched to a wide range of people and organisations with known interests in the Census. Its availability was widely advertised in the media. As well as outlining the broad nature of plans for taking the Census the paper summarised topic proposals for the next Census under three headings:

- topics to be included in the 1996 Census;
- topics on which the ABS was seeking further views from users; and
- topics to be excluded from the 1996 Census.

While comment was welcomed on any aspect of the 1996 Census, the main issues on which ABS sought advice were as follows:

- whether those topics on which the ABS was seeking further views from users should be included or excluded;
- whether there were any other topics which should be included in the 1996 Census. The Information Paper suggested that, in proposing the inclusion of an additional topic, users should nominate topic(s) collected in 1991 for deletion so that the 1996 Census would be no larger than the 1991 Census in terms of respondent load; and
- the arrangements for confidentiality and privacy.

The views of users were obtained in more than 280 written submissions and a range of consultation meetings with major users. In the light of these consultations draft recommendations on the content of the 1996 Census were discussed by the Australian Statistics Advisory Council in July 1993 and, following completion of further testing on some topics, at meetings in November 1993 and March 1994. Census content was also discussed by an Inter Departmental Committee formed to review the frequency of the Census of Population and Housing.

The final recommendations on the 1996 Census content have been approved by the Government.

### **Key Goals for the 1996 Census**

For the 1996 Census ABS has established a key goal of significantly reducing the time between taking the Census and the results becoming available in comparison with the 1991 Census. A wide range of final data will be available about ten months after the Census, representing a significant improvement on 1991. Topics which do not require complex coding will be released first.

The nature and content of the 1991 Census was well supported by the public who provided the information. To ensure continued public co-operation ABS also set a goal that the respondent load of the 1996 Census be about the same as for the 1991 Census. With the content agreed by the Government this goal has been achieved.

### **Privacy**

Protection of the privacy of individuals and the confidentiality of information supplied by them continue to be paramount to the successful conduct of a Census. Confidentiality and privacy issues are discussed in Chapter 3.

### **What happens next**

Regulations associated with the taking of the Census have been tabled in Parliament at the same time as the release of this information paper. Final testing of Census form design, field procedures and processing systems will be undertaken during 1994, followed by a Census dress rehearsal to be held in Sydney in August 1995. Consultation on the output program, including methods of dissemination will take place in 1994 and 1995.

## 2. COLLECTION OPERATIONS

### Census Date

The 1996 Census will be held on 6 August 1996, the same day as for the 1991 Census.

This date has been selected to avoid a clash with school holiday periods and to provide comparability with the data collected in 1991. The pattern of school holidays in 1996 prevented a return to the previously 'traditional' date around the 30th of June.

### Scope

The scope of the Census extends to all persons in Australia on Census night, but some exceptions exist such as the exclusion of foreign diplomats and their families and the inclusion of persons outside Australia who are not required to undertake migration formalities such as those on oil and gas rigs off the Australian coast. Visitors to Australia are counted regardless of how long they have been in the country or how long they plan to stay. Australian residents out of the country on Census night are generally out of the scope of the Census.

The Territories of Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island will be included in the 1996 Census. Following the enactment of the Territories Law Reform Act 1992, the results for these Territories will be included in the counts for Australia for the first time in 1996.

People will be counted where they are on Census night. That is the Census will be conducted on an actual location or place of enumeration basis.

### Objectives

The objective of collection operations is to develop and operate a secure collection system that achieves maximum coverage of the population in a cost effective manner. This incorporates the recruitment, training, supervision and remuneration associated with a temporary workforce of approximately 44,000 people. This also incorporates the logistics associated with designing and preparing maps and the printing, packing, distribution and return of over 1,700 tonnes of material.

### Mapping

Each collector will be responsible for the taking of the Census in a clearly bounded area, known as a collection district (CD). In an urban area CDs contain an average of about 200 dwellings whereas in rural areas the number of dwellings is less where population density is lower. There will be about 33,000 CDs covering Australia without overlap or omission. The design and mapping of these areas is a most important preliminary to the Census as they represent both the basic unit of collection and the building block for aggregation into broader level spatial units for dissemination purposes.

The ABS is developing a computer-based mapping system for the 1996 Census which will replace the traditional paper-based one. The main benefits of this will be a common map base for both collection and dissemination purposes, better maps for use by collectors leading to better coverage, increased ABS control over the design of CDs and dissemination products, and reduced mapping costs for subsequent Censuses.

### Public awareness

Public co-operation and acceptance of the Census is essential for the production of high quality statistics. For this reason a public awareness campaign will be conducted prior to and during the Census. The aims of the campaign will be to maintain high quality response to the Census by convincing the public of the usefulness of the statistics obtained and the confidentiality of the

information provided. The availability of assistance for those who may, for language or other reasons, experience difficulty in completing the form will also be made known.

### **Delivery and collection of Census forms**

Most of the temporary field staff recruited will be group leaders and collectors. Each group leader will be responsible for an average of about 11 collectors who themselves will be responsible for the delivery and collection of Census forms from all dwellings in their CD. Special collectors will be recruited to undertake Census duties in large non-private dwellings (such as hospitals, hotels and gaols) and caravan parks.

Collectors will commence delivery of Census forms about a week before Census day and commence collection on Wednesday 7 August.

A booklet, explaining the purpose of the Census, will be delivered with the Census form to each household. The collector will also answer any queries and arrange for collection of the completed Census form.

On collection, the collector will be instructed to scan each form for completeness, seek to resolve any omissions with the household concerned and provide other assistance if requested.

While experience has shown that in general this personal contact is welcomed, where a householder does not want the completed Census form to be seen by the collector, an envelope will be available from the collector in which the form can be sealed. The envelope will then be passed unopened to the group leader who will then check the form for completeness. In addition, any individual member of a household can request a separate form and envelope in which to record their own details. The availability of envelopes for privacy will be explained to householders on the Census form itself and in the accompanying booklet.

In non-private dwellings persons usually receive separate forms and envelopes in which the completed form can be sealed. Special collectors appointed to cover large establishments are not permitted to open the sealed envelopes. In some cases staff of these dwellings complete the form on behalf of the persons involved (e.g. for frail persons in a nursing home).

### **Special assistance in completion of Census forms**

In addition to the public awareness campaign and assistance available from collectors, several other methods will be used to assist respondents to understand the nature and purpose of the Census and to complete the Census form. These include the use of a telephone interpreter service, interpreters for persons who have English language problems and a telephone enquiry service for general public enquiries.

### **Enumeration of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations**

Special procedures will be implemented to ensure that the coverage of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations is as complete as possible. These procedures will be further developed from those used successfully for the 1986 and 1991 Censuses.

### **Non co-operation**

It is expected that the public awareness campaign on the nature of the Census the assurances on confidentiality and the uses of the resulting statistics will keep problems of non co-operation to a minimum. People who do not co-operate with the collector will usually be approached by the group leader in an endeavour to overcome problems or objections. If necessary, this approach will be followed up by a letter from ABS explaining the purposes and value of the Census and its legal status, and seeking the householder's cooperation. Further action, including legal action, will generally be considered only after these measures have failed.

### 3. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

The Census collects information relating to each person and household in the country. But it is not concerned with facts about individuals as such but to provide facts about the community as a whole and about groups within the community. The public has a right to expect that the information they provide will be kept confidential. This protection is provided by provisions in the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

The ABS also has an obligation to comply with the Information Privacy Principles set out in the *Privacy Act 1988*.

To ensure that confidentiality and privacy provisions are observed a comprehensive set of practices will be adopted by the ABS. In the 1996 Census they will take the following form:

- (a) Temporary staff recruited for collection and processing of the Census as well as permanent staff having access to completed Census forms are officers of the Australian Bureau of Statistics. All ABS officers are legally bound to secrecy under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. Officers sign an undertaking of fidelity and secrecy to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities in regard to Census data. Section 19 of the Census and Statistics Act forbids past or present ABS officers from divulging information collected under this Act, either directly or indirectly, under penalty of a fine of up to \$5,000 or imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years, or both.
- (b) In large urban areas procedures are established to avoid collectors working in the districts in which they live, to minimise the possibility of collection of information from people they know personally. However, in other areas, where fewer applications can be expected for Census collector positions and travel involves significant costs, collectors will be recruited who might know some householders. If a collector does know a householder they will be instructed to offer the householder an envelope in which to seal the completed form.
- (c) Householders will be advised in the booklet delivered with each form that anyone who does not want their completed form to be seen by the collector will be able to obtain from the collector an envelope in which to seal the form. Census collectors will be required to pass all such sealed envelopes unopened to their field supervisor who will then scan the form for completeness. In addition, any individual member of a household can request a separate form and envelope in which to record their own details and seal their Census form from other members of the household. Persons not in private dwellings generally receive separate forms and envelopes. Persons who say they are not satisfied with these arrangements will be able to send a completed form to the ABS by mail.
- (d) In order to prevent disclosure of Census information to third parties who find lost forms, Census collectors will be instructed to pick up Census forms in person from householders and not to suggest arrangements whereby completed forms are left outside the house at some pre-arranged location.
- (e) Completed Census forms will be transferred from the field to the Census processing centre under secure arrangements. Full-time security personnel will be employed to prevent any unauthorised access to the processing centre.
- (f) Security arrangements are implemented on the ABS computer system which include the use of regularly changed passwords and access control. Audit trails will also be developed.
- (g) Names and addresses of persons and households collected in the Census will NOT be stored on computer files.

- (h) Census forms containing names and addresses will be accounted for and destroyed under strict supervision immediately after data have been processed and validated. Destruction will be carried out by pulping to ensure that Census forms are not able to be reassembled in a readable form.
- (i) In accordance with the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, no Census results will be released in a way which would enable particular individuals or households to be identified. In particular, the ABS has made slight random adjustments to the tabulated data in past Censuses. Similar, or enhanced, procedures, will be employed in the 1996 Census. The information will be used for statistical purposes only.

### **Destruction of Census forms**

In Australia, Census forms have been destroyed once the statistical data required for the purposes of the Census have been extracted. Such destruction is consistent with the guarantee of confidentiality provided to people completing the forms.

It was noted in the Information Paper "*1996 Census of Population and Housing: ABS Views on Content and Procedures (2007.0)*" that the Statistician wished to be aware of any specific proposals for statistical analysis which require the retention of Census forms or identifiable Census data beyond the period required for Census purposes. A range of restrictions were identified to ensure that any proposal recognized the need to protect privacy and confidentiality issues. In particular it was stated that any proposal should be for statistical purposes only. In the event, no proposals were received as a result of this consultation exercise.

The existing practice of destroying the forms will continue.

### **Post Census Surveys**

The Information Paper "*1996 Census of Population and Housing: ABS Views on Content and Procedures (2007.0)*" raised the possibility of the Census being used to establish a sampling frame for subsequent surveys of small groups of the population. No specific proposals were put to the ABS during the user consultation for post 1996 Census surveys using the Census as a framework. The 1996 Census will not be used for this purpose.



#### 4. PROCESSING AND EVALUATION

For the 1996 Census data will be captured and processed using the same basic methods that were used successfully in 1991, namely optical mark recognition (OMR) and computer assisted coding (CAC).

##### Imputation for non-response

There are a number of circumstances in which less than complete information is provided in respect of a dwelling. In some of these circumstances it is possible to impute the missing information from other information provided by the respondent. However, in Australia it has been the practise to allocate a code of "not stated" in many situations of non-response and only to impute in a very limited number of circumstances:

- where there is missing information relating to age, sex, marital status or State of usual residence the answer is imputed in all cases;
- where no response is given for relationship, Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander origin, birthplace or birthplace of parents, but the true response is clear from other information on the form; and
- labour force status may be derived by reference to responses to a number of questions.

Some other countries undertake imputation on a much wider scale, in some cases imputing for virtually all question non-response. In those countries it is believed that the statistical agency is better placed to make such judgements than the users who may resort to techniques such as pro-rata adjustment of published information on the frequency of 'not stated' codes across all 'stated' categories.

Results from the 1991 Census in Australia indicate that the level of question non-response has in many cases been higher than it was in the 1986 Census. This is similar to, but less severe than, experience in a number of other countries. However the ABS does not propose to increase the extent of imputation on a wide scale. In reaching this conclusion ABS has taken particular note that:

- the process of imputation may not represent any real increase in the information content of the Census output - rather, by concealing the level of question non-response, it will remove users' flexibility to use their judgement of the best way of overcoming the problem;
- by adding further work to the processing task, additional imputation will almost inevitably lead to delays in the availability of output; and
- it is often the case that where information from one question is needed to impute the answer to another question, both will be missing - thus in many practical situations there will still be a level of question non-response and some codes of 'not-stated'.

##### Results

The ABS has established the timely release of data as one of its key objectives for the 1996 Census. To facilitate this data will be released in two stages. Topics included in the first release will be those that can be processed quickly, reliably and with little extra cost. They will be made available for all States about ten months after the Census. Data on the remaining topics will be made available on a State by State basis, commencing about 12 months after the Census. The topics included in each of the two release stages are shown in Appendix 1.

There is a continuing strong demand for Census data according to place of enumeration. However, a range of usual residence based data will also be available.

## **Classifications**

Most classifications proposed to be used will be similar to those used in the 1991 Census. The main changes will be in the introduction of the new ANZSIC (Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification) and the updated Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO). User consultations on proposed classifications will be conducted later in 1994.

## **Investigations of output products**

The ABS intends to undertake a review of output products and services from the 1991 Census in consultation with users. This will include an opportunity for users to suggest new products from the 1996 Census.

Other investigative work planned includes:

- methods of electronic dissemination;
- a better method of storing and accessing Census data to facilitate more rapid and more efficient tabulation;
- ways of including other ABS data in standard products; and
- output mapping needs for the 1996 Census.

## **Evaluation**

An integral step in the conduct of the Census is an evaluation aimed at providing a measure of the extent of underenumeration of persons and households. For this purpose a post enumeration survey will be conducted soon after Census night. The survey is conducted in a sample of private households asking questions about people's place of usual residence and addresses before, during and after Census night to help establish whether a person had been missed, counted once, or counted more than once in the Census. In addition to this, questions are asked on age, sex, marital status, Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander origin and country of birth.

Further detailed evaluation studies will be conducted to assist users of Census data with information about data quality and to provide feedback for improvements to be made for the following Census.

A full review of the effectiveness of the 1996 Census will be included in the Portfolio Evaluation Program due for completion in 1999.

## 5. PERSONAL TOPICS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE 1996 CENSUS

In the Census of Population and Housing information is collected by self-enumeration. Each household is required to fill in the details specified on the Census form with relatively little assistance from the Census collector. Self-enumeration and the need to ensure that the large Census operation is conducted as efficiently and effectively as possible, impose certain constraints on the type of topics and questions asked in order to minimise the reporting burden on households and control Census costs.

These constraints are reflected in the following criteria used to assess topics for inclusion in the Census:

- whether the topic is of major national importance;
- whether the Census is an appropriate method of collecting the data, given alternative sources and methods; and
- whether the topic is suitable for inclusion in the Census.

Taking these criteria into consideration, the Government has decided what topics will be included in the 1996 Census. Listed below are the topics relating to persons. The topics relating to households and dwellings are shown in Chapter 6.

### **Name**

#### **Basic Demography**

Sex and Age  
 Family relationship (see Chapter 7)  
 Marital status  
 Usual residence at Census time  
 Internal migration (Address of usual residence 1 year ago and 5 years ago)  
 Issue (number of children ever born)

### **Religion**

#### **Ethnicity**

Citizenship  
 Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander origin  
 Country of birth  
 Year of arrival  
 Country of birth of parents  
 Language spoken at home/proficiency in English

### **Education**

Attendance at an educational institution  
 Age left school  
 Education qualifications

### **Labour force**

Labour force status  
 Occupation  
 Industry  
 Hours worked

### **Transport**

Journey to work  
 Mode of travel to work

### **Income (individual)**

In each topic an illustration is given of the type of question proposed for the 1996 Census. Further testing planned to be undertaken in 1994 and 1995 may see that the questions actually used differ from those illustrated.

## NAME

### Historical background

Names have been requested in all previous Censuses.

### Type of question

**Name of each person *including visitors* who spent the night of Tuesday, 6 August 1996 in this household:**

- Record details for all adults, children, babies and *visitors*.
- Include any person who returned on Wednesday 7 August 1996, without having been counted elsewhere.
- Enter the householder or any adult household member as 'Person 1' and if present, the spouse or partner as 'Person 2'.

First or given name

Surname or family name

### Justification

Names are essential to the conduct of an accurate Census. The inclusion of names on Census forms reduces the incidence of inaccurate responses and non-completion of forms. The Australian Law Reform Commission, in its 1979 report on Privacy and the Census, found that an anonymous Census would result in an unacceptable level of non-response and an equally unacceptable bias in responses.

Names are also used with other information to help determine, for coding purposes, the composition of households, especially where households consist of more than one family. They are also used by collectors should they need to refer back to individuals within households.

Names are essential for the conduct of the post-enumeration survey which measures the level of underenumeration in the Census. These estimates are an important component of revisions to estimated resident populations for each of the States and Local Government Areas.

### Assessment

Names are essential for the conduct of an accurate Census.

The inclusion of names in the Census does raise privacy concerns but the confidentiality of data provided is carefully guarded. Names of persons are not kept on computer files and no identifiable information about an individual is made available to any other person, government agency or private organisation. All Census forms will be destroyed once the processing of data has been completed (See also Chapter 3 on privacy and confidentiality).

## SEX and AGE

### Historical background

The topics of sex and age have been included in every Australian Census since 1911.

### Type of questions

#### Is the person male or female

- Mark one box for each person, for example (—)

( ) Male

( ) Female

#### Mark the person's age last birthday.

- If age is less than one year, mark box (0) as (0).
- Mark one box for each person. For example, for a person aged 31 years:

##### Example

##### Years:

(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8)  
 (9) (10) (11) (12) (13) (14) (15) (16) (17)  
 (18) (19) (20) (21) (22) (23) (24) (25) (26)  
 (27) (28) (29) (30) (31) (32) (33) (34) (35)  
 (36) (37) (38) (39) (40) (41) (42) (43) (44)  
 (45) (46) (47) (48) (49) (50) (51) (52) (53)  
 (54) (55) (56) (57) (58) (59) (60) (61) (62)  
 (63) (64) (65) (66) (67) (68) (69) (70) (71)  
 (72) (73) (74) (75) (76) (77) (78) (79) (80)  
 (81) (82) (83) (84) (85) (86) (87) (88) (89)  
 ( ) 90 years or more - please specify

##### Years:

(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8)  
 (9) (10) (11) (12) (13) (14) (15) (16) (17)  
 (18) (19) (20) (21) (22) (23) (24) (25) (26)  
 (27) (28) (29) (30) (31) (32) (33) (34) (35)  
 (36) (37) (38) (39) (40) (41) (42) (43) (44)  
 (45) (46) (47) (48) (49) (50) (51) (52) (53)  
 (54) (55) (56) (57) (58) (59) (60) (61) (62)  
 (63) (64) (65) (66) (67) (68) (69) (70) (71)  
 (72) (73) (74) (75) (76) (77) (78) (79) (80)  
 (81) (82) (83) (84) (85) (86) (87) (88) (89)  
 ( ) 90 years or more - please specify

### Major Changes from 1991 question

The presentation of the age grid may change to a pattern more familiar to respondents.

### User requirements

Sex and age counts are essential for the production of accurate population estimates. Users require counts by sex and single year of age for small geographic areas and small groups of the population as a basic input to many planning and policy development activities. The sex and age variables are also widely used with other characteristics of the population in cross classified tables.

### Assessment

The topics sex and age are essential items for the production of accurate State population estimates, a major objective of the Census, and for sub-State population estimates. They are valuable items in their own right for planning and policy development and data on sex and age are essential for virtually all demographic studies.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## **MARITAL STATUS**

### **Historical Background**

A question on marital status has been included in all previous Censuses.

### **Type of question**

**What is the person's present marital status?**

- ☐ Never Married
- ☐ Widowed
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Separated but not divorced
- ☐ Married

### **Major Changes from 1991 question**

The order of responses may be changed to reduce bias in responses.

### **User requirements**

Marital Status is a basic demographic characteristic. It is important for the analysis of other social and economic topics included in the Census. Its use as a cross-classifier enhances the value of most other Census items.

Data from this topic are used by the ABS to maintain the accuracy of the estimated resident population by marital status. This series is the benchmark for the calculation of many rates and ratios used in socio-economic studies.

### **Assessment**

The major values of this topic are in its use as a cross-classifier which enhances the value of other Census topics and as a key social and demographic indicator.

For the 1996 Census the ABS sought advice from users about the value of continuing to collect data on legal or registered marital status when this was not always indicative of actual living arrangements. Many users were strongly in favour of retaining the question on marital status as well as a question on living arrangements. Marital Status is still regarded as an important demographic characteristic. It is neither a complex nor costly topic to process.

In view of strong user support and low processing costs associated with this topic it will be retained for the 1996 Census.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## USUAL RESIDENCE AT CENSUS TIME

### Historical background

A question on a person's place of usual residence at Census time was first included in the 1961 Census when persons who were temporarily absent from their usual residence were asked to name their State or Territory of usual residence (or overseas if appropriate). The topic was not included in 1966 but has been included in all Censuses since 1971.

### Type of question

#### What is the person's usual address?

- 'Usual' address is that address at which the person has lived or intends to live for a total of 6 months or more in 1996.
- For persons who now have no usual address, regard this dwelling as their usual address.
- For boarders at boarding school or college, give address at boarding school or college.

( ) The address shown on the front of this form

( ) Elsewhere in Australia - please specify address

Street number and name

Suburb, rural locality or town

State/Territory

Postcode



( ) Other country

### Major Changes from 1991 question

A self-coded category will be added to allow respondents with a usual address that is overseas to mark a box rather than writing their full address as many did in the 1991 Census.

### User requirements

The most important use for data on place of usual residence at Census time is to obtain usual residence Census counts for the estimation of usual resident populations for States, Territories and local government areas. These population estimates are used in determining the number of seats in the House of Representatives allocated to each State, and the distribution of Commonwealth funds to the States, Territories and local government authorities.

### Non-Census data available

Many ABS surveys include questions on usual residence of members of the household but small sample sizes do not enable generation of data of sufficient accuracy to use in compiling resident population estimates for local government areas.

### Assessment

Data on usual residents are essential to the production of accurate State, Territory and local government population estimates, the primary objective of the Census.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.



## INTERNAL MIGRATION (Address of usual residence 1 year ago and 5 years ago)

### Historical Background

Since 1971 persons have been asked to state their usual residence 5 years ago to enable statistics on internal migration to be compiled. A further question on usual residence one year ago was included in the 1976, 1981 and 1986 Censuses. From 1976 to 1986, full addresses were requested and subsequently coded to Census local government areas or, since 1986, Statistical Local Areas (SLA). Only a locality code, not the actual address, is stored on the computer files.

In 1991, respondents were asked for their State of usual residence 1 year ago and a full address for residence five years ago.

### Type of questions

#### Where was the person's usual address one year ago (at 6 August 1995)?

- If the person is less than one year old, leave blank.
- For persons who had no usual address on 6 August 1995, give the address at which they were then living.

- ( ) Same as in question 8  
 ( ) Elsewhere in Australia -  
 please specify address  
 Street number and name

Suburb, rural locality or town

State/Territory

Postcode



- ( ) Other country

#### Where was the person's usual address five years ago (at 6 August 1991)?

- If the person is less than five years old, leave blank.
- For persons who had no usual address on 6 August 1991, give the address at which they were then living.

- ( ) Same as in question 8  
 ( ) Elsewhere in Australia -  
 please specify address  
 Street number and name

Suburb, rural locality or town

State/Territory

Postcode



- ( ) Other country

### Major Changes from 1991 question.

Full details, rather than State only, will be collected for usual address 1 year ago.

## **User requirements**

Data on a person's usual residence at some prior point in time (e.g. 1 or 5 years ago), when combined with detailed responses to the question on usual residence at Census time, provide information on the extent of internal migration of the population. Coupled with other questions on the form, the questions on usual residence provide information on characteristics of the migratory population as well as the non-migratory population. Such data are used in the production of intercensal and postcensal population estimates, all of which are compiled on the basis of usual residence. In addition, internal migration data is an important basis for projections of the population in particular areas.

Information on the internal migration patterns of the population at national, State, regional, local government and collection district levels is required for many planning purposes. In particular the data are used in:

- forecasting short and medium term housing requirements;
- planning transport, health and educational services; and
- zoning, release and development of land for residential and commercial purposes.

## **Non-Census data available**

Data on place of residence one year ago was collected in the Internal Migration Surveys between 1970 and 1987 but statistics were not available at the small area level and survey results were not reliable for smaller States and Territories. The survey has now been discontinued. Some administrative by-product data (eg: change of address information from Medicare) give regular statistics on the number of movements, but only very limited details are available on the characteristics of movers. Such data are also subject to changes in their coverage.

The Census is the only source of data on place of residence 5 years ago.

## **Assessment**

Information on usual residence 1 year ago is required for the calculation of ratios for use in the postcensal estimation of interstate migration. These in turn are an essential component of calculating Estimated Resident Population.

Usual residence 5 years ago is required for analysis of internal migration and for revision of population estimates for the immediate past intercensal period. Census data allow a direct measure of this component of population estimates to be obtained.

For the 1991 Census, data was obtained for usual residence 1 year ago at State/Territory level only and at the statistical local area level for usual residence 5 years ago. However, users have been concerned about the absence of data at Statistical Local Area level for usual residence 1 year ago.

While the ABS was initially reluctant to collect data at the SLA level for both usual residence one and five years ago, strong representation from a number of users (especially State Governments) impressed the ABS that a significant need for both could be demonstrated. Thus the 1996 Census will include questions requesting full address for place of usual residence both 1 year ago and 5 years ago.

For the 1996 Census, a self-coded category will be added to allow respondents to mark 'overseas' as their usual address 1 or 5 years ago rather than writing their full address as in the 1991 Census.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.

## ISSUE (NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN)

### Historical background

A question on the number of children ever born was asked in almost all Australian Censuses up to and including 1986. The question was not included in the 1991 Census as it was not considered necessary to collect data on this topic every five years.

### Type of question

**For each female, how many babies  
has she ever had?**

. Include only live births

- ☐ None
- ☐ One
- ☐ Two
- ☐ Three
- ☐ Four or more

### Major Changes from 1986 question

OMR boxes are provided for the answers to the question.

### User requirements

Data on fertility are required for investigations of fertility differentials between various groups such as indigenous people, migrants and different socio-economic groups. Such information is vital for predicting future fertility of subgroups and for forming related policies.

### Non-Census data available

Some information on the number of children ever born is available from the 1992 Family Survey but not for small groups of the population. Birth registrations provide general information on fertility, but only some States and Territories collect data which separately identify Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders.

### Assessment

Extensive data on fertility are available annually from the registration of births. Registration data, however, do not necessarily provide complete information for fertility measurement as some States and Territories only identify the number of children from the current marriage or relationship. Data from birth and death registrations identifying indigenous people are available, or are becoming available, from most State and Territory registrars and some health authorities. These data, together with data from the relationship and age questions included in the Census should enable reliable estimates to be made of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fertility.

ABS consultation with users indicated there is not sufficient justification for a question on the number of children now living as well as the question on total number of children ever born.

The instruction has been reworded to avoid the use of "still-births" which caused concern to some respondents. The final question design will be determined after further testing.

The question will be positioned in the Census form so that it will only need to be answered for females of 15 or more years of age.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## RELIGION

### Historical background

A question on a person's religion has been asked in all Australian Censuses. The *Census and Statistics Act 1905* specifies that response to this question is optional. Despite the optional nature of the Religion question approximately 90% of respondents provide a reply.

### Type of question

#### What is each person's religious denomination?

- Answering this question is **OPTIONAL**.
- If no religion, mark last box.

- ☐ Catholic
- ☐ Anglican (Church of England)
- ☐ Uniting Church
- ☐ Presbyterian
- ☐ Greek Orthodox
- ☐ Baptist
- ☐ Lutheran
- ☐ Other-please specify

- ☐ No religion

The response categories used in the 1996 Census will be based on response categories most commonly reported in the 1991 Census.

### User requirements

Data on religious affiliations of the population are required for the planning of a wide range of activities and services involving religious organisations, including:

- location of churches, education facilities, aged persons care and other social services;
- the allocation of chaplains to hospitals, prisons and the armed services;
- the accreditation of marriage celebrants; and
- allocation of Government grants to non-government schools and religious groups, sociological research and the allocation of air time on public radio.

In addition, the 1986 Population Census Ethnicity Committee in its April 1984 Report considered that information on a person's religion was, to some extent, useful as a surrogate measure of ethnicity.

### Non-Census data available

Data on the religious affiliations of the population are not available from other sources but some data on religion are obtained from marriage registrations in the form of files used by marriage celebrants.

## **Assessment**

Users have argued that religious organisations are the largest providers of services to the community outside those provided by Governments and the Census is the only source of data they can use for the effective and efficient planning of such services.

The data are widely used in the religious community, and by Government agencies which provide services which complement services provided by religious organisations.

There has been some concern that the religious denominations in the self-coded list in the 1991 Census questions are all Christian denominations. However, only a small number of the most common response categories can be listed in the space available. The categories selected and their order were determined solely according to the frequency of responses in the 1986 Census.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## CITIZENSHIP

### Historical background

A question on nationality was first asked in 1921, when respondents were asked to indicate what national subject they were by means of birthplace, parentage or naturalisation. From 1933 to 1961 'nationality' was asked. In 1966 and 1971 the term 'nationality or citizenship' was used. Since 1976 the question has used the word 'citizenship'. In 1986 and 1991 the question was self-coding with only two response categories (Australia, Other).

### Type of question

Is the person an Australian citizen?

- ☐ Yes, Australian citizen  
☐ No

### User requirements

Data on citizenship are used for targeting electoral roll maintenance, citizenship promotion and costing reciprocal social security agreements with overseas countries. They also indicate the extent to which people born in certain countries take up Australian citizenship. The data are often cross-classified with birthplace, year of arrival and age data.

### Non-Census data available

Information from the Population Census serves as the benchmark for statistics on citizenship. This information can be updated by:

- (a) data on the country of citizenship of settler arrivals as indicated on passenger cards completed by persons entering and leaving Australia; and
- (b) data on the number of migrants who become Australian citizens.

Both these sources of information have limitations in that they do not give a complete picture of the "stock" of citizens at a point in time, nor do they provide reliable small area data.

### Assessment

Data on citizenship are important for ensuring the effectiveness of promotional activity for electoral and citizenship policies, and in costing reciprocal Social Security arrangements with overseas countries. Although not initially considered a high priority for inclusion in the 1996 Census, this topic will be included in the 1996 Census because of the low processing cost involved and the demonstrated need for small area data.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## ABORIGINAL/TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ORIGIN

### Historical background

In all Censuses prior to 1971 respondents were asked to state their race and, where race was mixed, to specify the proportions of each. In the 1971 and 1976 Censuses a question with response categories of European, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Other was included. Since 1981, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been separately identified. In remote areas, special interview forms were used to facilitate the enumeration of these groups.

Special measures have also been adopted to obtain as complete a coverage as possible of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations. These included increased Census awareness activities, greater use of Aboriginal collectors and assistants, greater involvement of Aboriginal organisations, and better co-ordination of special field operations.

### Type of question

#### Is the person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

- For persons of mixed origin, indicate the one to which they consider themselves to belong.

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, Aboriginal
- ☐ Yes, Torres Strait Islander

### User requirements

The main purpose of this topic is to identify the number and distribution of people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.

Data on the distribution and characteristics of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations are important to Commonwealth and State authorities responsible for developing policies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in such fields as housing, health services, education, social security and special assistance programs. The Commonwealth Grants Commission requires accurate data on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations for use in the allocation of funds to the States and Territories for services directed at these populations. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) requires small area demographic data for use in the planning and administrative activities of ATSIC Regional Councils.

### Non-Census data available

There have been some improvements in recent years on the extent to which data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are available from relevant Commonwealth and State government authorities. However, the available data are still limited in coverage and quality.

The ABS plans to conduct an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey in 1994 to provide statistical data on a wide range of topics at national and State level. In addition, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identifier will be included in relevant household surveys.

### Assessment

Given the absence of comprehensive and reliable data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from administrative systems, the Census is the only source of socio-demographic data on the indigenous population for small areas. It is considered essential to include a question of the same design as that used in recent Censuses in order to maintain comparability.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## COUNTRY OF BIRTH

### Historical background

A question on a person's country of birth has been included in every Australian Census since Federation. Before the 1981 Census, with the exception of the 1921 Census, respondents were asked to provide details of the State or Territory of birth if born in Australia, or country of birth if born overseas. In 1921 and in Censuses since 1981, State or Territory details have not been required.

### Type of question

**In which country was the person born?**

- ☐ Australia. Go to...
- ☐ England
- ☐ Scotland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ New Zealand
- ☐ Vietnam
- ☐ Other - please specify

The list of response categories for this question is designed to reflect those countries which are reported most often at the Census. The need for separate data on England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will be assessed during consultation with users on the Census output classification.

### User requirements

Data on country of birth are critical in targeting settlement assistance to migrants. They are used for the examination of the need for, and the utilisation of, health, education and other social services for migrant groups, for labour force training and recruitment and for the formulation and monitoring of many other government policies and programs related to migrants. For these purposes the data is mostly required at a small area level and is often cross-classified with year of arrival data.

The inclusion of the country of birth topic in the Census will enable the ABS to maintain the accuracy of the estimated resident population by country of birth series.

### Non-Census data available

A question on country of birth is included in every ABS population survey, although detailed country of birth information is not available from these surveys because of high sampling error on estimates for small geographic areas and for many small birthplace groups.

Regular statistics on overseas arrivals and departures classified by country of birth are available from the processing of passenger cards required to be completed for each movement.



**Assessment**

Most of the important uses of country of birth information require detailed data for the large number of source countries of Australian migrants. Such data are also required for small areas. These needs cannot be met with acceptable quality from sample surveys nor overseas arrivals and departures statistics. The value of the data is greatly enhanced when cross-classified with data on period of residence in Australia which enables recent migrants to be distinguished from those who arrived some time ago. The data are widely used in planning and policy development.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## YEAR OF ARRIVAL

### Historical background

A question on date of first arrival in Australia or number of completed years of residence in Australia, has been asked of overseas born residents in all Australian Censuses since 1911.

### Type of question

**In what year did the person first arrive in Australia to live here for one year or more?**

- ☐ Before 1981
- ☐ 1981-1985
- ☐ 1986-1989
- ☐ 1990-1992
- ☐ 1993
- ☐ 1994
- ☐ 1995
- ☐ 1996
- ☐ Will be here less than one year

### Major Changes from 1991 question

The wording of the question and the periods specified will be amended for the 1996 Census to reflect the new standard approach to this topic for all ABS surveys asking about the year of arrival in Australia of the overseas born.

### User requirements

Data on year of arrival, when cross-classified with other Census data, are used to analyse changes in the characteristics of migrants to Australia over time. In addition, users have identified the following needs for these data:

- for the separate identification of recent compared with 'older' migrant groups, with the former generally requiring more services; and
- in analysis of various aspects of migrant participation in the labour force.

The data are generally required at a small area level.

### Non-Census data available

Most ABS population surveys collect information on year of arrival for the overseas born population. Regular statistics on overseas arrivals are available from the processing of passenger cards required for each movement.

### Assessment

Year of arrival is an important cross-classifier for analysing data on the overseas-born population. Survey data cannot provide the small area data needed and cross-classified tables on the many country of birth groups that are possible with Census results.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## COUNTRY OF BIRTH OF PARENTS

### Historical background

A question on country of birth of parents was first asked in 1921, when the data were used to investigate the extent of the relationship between country of birth and race of persons born in Asia who were resident in Australia. No tabulations of country of birth of parents were released.

A question of country of birth of parents was not asked again until 1971 but has been asked in all subsequent Australian Censuses.

### Type of questions

#### In which country was the person's father born?

- ☐ Australia
- ☐ England
- ☐ Scotland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ New Zealand
- ☐ The Netherlands
- ☐ Other - please specify

#### In which country was the person's mother born?

- ☐ Australia
- ☐ England
- ☐ Scotland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ New Zealand
- ☐ The Netherlands
- ☐ Other - please specify

The list of response categories for this question is designed to reflect those countries which are reported most often at the Census. The need for separate data on England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will be assessed during consultation with users on the Census output classification.

### User requirements

Data on country of birth of parents indicate the ethnic background of Australians and are used in planning the delivery of services to migrants and in access and equity reviews.

The data are used in assessments of communities which in turn affect the allocation of resources/facilities that are made on a community basis.

They are also used in analysis of the impact of migration flows from particular countries through to the second generation. Most uses of the data require detailed data for the large number of source countries and for small areas.

### **Non-Census data available**

The only regular data on country of birth of parents published by the ABS are derived from birth and marriage registrations. Data on country of birth of parents has been occasionally obtained in ABS surveys.

### **Assessment**

The questions on country of birth of parents provide objective data on ethnicity in general and on the second-generation population in particular. The data provides important background information to planning decisions including those relating to access and equity. Consultations with users indicated that the needs for data on Birthplace of Parents were too significant to justify omitting the topic in favour of an ancestry question or reducing the detail collected.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME/PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH

### Historical background

A language question was first included in 1921 when the question was asked whether the person could read and write. In 1933 the question asked whether the person could read and write a foreign language if unable to read and write English. Language was not included again until 1976, when a question on languages regularly used was included.

In 1981, a question was asked on proficiency in spoken English for those persons speaking a language other than English at home. In 1986 and 1991 two questions were asked: one on whether a language other than English is spoken at home, and if so what language; and the other dealing with proficiency in spoken English.

### Type of questions

**Does the person speak a language other than English at home?**

- ☐ No, English only. go to...
- ☐ Yes, Italian
- ☐ Yes, Greek
- ☐ Yes, Cantonese
- ☐ Yes, Mandarin
- ☐ Yes, Arabic
- ☐ Yes, German
- ☐ Yes, other - please specify

**How well does the person speak English?**

- ☐ Very well
- ☐ Well
- ☐ Not well
- ☐ Not at all

Response categories included in the question reflect the languages most commonly spoken at home, except for Mandarin. It has been included to cover the two main Chinese dialects and to avoid distortion due to speakers of Mandarin opting for Cantonese in the belief that it is the only Chinese dialect available. The list will be reviewed prior to finalising the 1996 Census form.

### User requirements

Data on languages used are required:

- for the investigation and development of language services such as interpretation/translation and education;
- for the implementation of the national language policy; and
- as an indicator of 'active' ethnicity.

Data on proficiency in English are needed for:

- the development of English teaching programs;
- the development of multilingual information programs;
- the provision of interpretation/translation services; and
- the provision of migrant welfare services.

Data on languages used and proficiency in English are required at small area level and for small population groups for the planning and delivery of the above services.

### **Non-Census data available**

A small number of ABS surveys collect data on the main language spoken at home.

### **Assessment**

Language use questions have importance in implementation of national and State policies on language. They are used for study of language acquisition and inter-generational language retention.

Users in all levels of Government and community groups require data on proficiency in English at small area level and for small groups for use in targeting both language services and welfare or community services aimed at migrants.

The Government's objectives in its access and equity policy require language use data to be available for monitoring and implementing associated programs.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## ATTENDANCE AT AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

### Historical background

A variety of questions enabling the identification of full-time students has been included in all Censuses. Questions on type of educational institution being attended by students have also been asked in varying degrees of detail in a number of Censuses to enable comprehensive statistics to be produced on the characteristics of people attending various types of institutions.

### Type of questions

#### Is the person attending a school or any other educational institution?

• Include external or correspondence students.

- ( ) No Go to ...
- ( ) Yes, full-time student
- ( ) Yes, part-time student

#### What type of educational institution is the person attending?

• Include external or correspondence students.

- ( ) Pre-school
- Infants/Primary school**
- ( ) Government
- ( ) Non-Government
- Secondary school**
- ( ) Government
- ( ) Non-Government
- Tertiary Institution**
- ( ) Technical or further educational institution (including TAFE Colleges)
- ( ) University or other higher educational institution
- ( ) Other educational institution

### Major Changes from 1991 questions

Due to structural changes in the higher education system, some changes in terminology are necessary.

The ABS is exploring the option of splitting the possible responses relating to the type of Non-Government school attended. The final form of the question may separately identify "Catholic" and "Other Non-Government" primary and secondary schools.

### User requirements

Users require data on demographic, family, economic and social characteristics of persons attending particular types of educational institutions.

Information on whether a person is aged 15-20 years and a full-time student is used by ABS for identifying dependent family children in family coding.

The data enables education planners to compare the current participation levels of small groups in the population. It also assists in developing policies affecting the labour market.

Information on the relationship between education and labour market activities of young people in particular is required for Governments to monitor the impact of their policies and programs relating to people in the labour market. While much of this need is met by surveys, the Census provides data for small areas and for small groups which assists in planning the delivery of programs. Data on type of institution being attended further enhance analysis by providing data on the participation of different groups in the population in the various levels of education.

### **Non-Census data available**

Data on attendance at schools, universities and technical and further education colleges are collected each year from administrative sources but limited socio-economic data are available from these sources.

Monthly labour force surveys ask people whether or not they are attending school. Data on school and tertiary attendance for persons aged 15-64 are also available from the annual ABS survey 'Transition from Education to Work'.

### **Assessment**

Information on whether a person is attending an educational institution has important uses for education and labour market planning. It is also essential for identifying dependent family children in family coding.

The Census provides a wider range of information on the characteristics of students than is currently available from the statistics derived from administrative sources. This topic is considered to be of high priority by education planners at Commonwealth, State and community level. Significant changes are occurring in education participation and further changes are anticipated. Data from this question cross-classified with other characteristics will be very important in monitoring the changes as they occur.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.



## AGE LEFT SCHOOL

### Historical background

A question relating to level of school attainment was first asked in 1966 when a question on the highest level of schooling was included. In 1976 the question was changed to age left school to overcome reporting problems due to the lack of standardisation of schooling across States and different systems used overseas. In 1991, with Optical Mark Recognition being used to capture data, the question asked for responses in self-coded categories.

### Type of question

#### How old was the person when he or she left primary or secondary school?

- For persons who returned after a break to complete their schooling, mark the age at which they last left school.

- ( ) Still at primary or secondary school
- ( ) Did not go to school
- ( ) 14 years or younger
- ( ) 15 years
- ( ) 16 years
- ( ) 17 years
- ( ) 18 years
- ( ) 19 years or older

### User requirements

Data on age left school are used as a surrogate for the highest level of schooling attained and are primarily required for:

- assessing the likely usefulness of extension courses or other educational programs- and
- an indicator of disadvantage because it shows the level of education reached by persons with no post-school qualifications.

### Non-Census data available

Statistics on age left school and highest grade attended are collected annually as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey.

Administrative data provide detailed information on age participation rates at school for contemporary students, and the age at which students leave school.

### Assessment

From time to time, some users request the inclusion of a question on highest level of schooling, rather than age left school, because 'age left school' was not considered an adequate approximation of educational attainment at school. However, testing has shown that changes in education systems over time and differences in school systems and grading terminology between States (and overseas) continue to make a question on highest level of schooling unsuitable for a Census.

This topic is an important adjunct to qualifications data for people without post-school qualifications, as well as an important indicator of educational need or disadvantage. Information on 'age left school' is particularly important because of the extent of change occurring in education participation and in labour market adjustment.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

### Historical background

An education question in which respondents reported their highest level of achievement was included in the 1911 Census. However, a question directly asking about education qualifications was not included until 1976 when respondents were asked to provide details of the qualification name and institution at which it was obtained. Since 1971, persons aged 15 or over have been asked whether they had obtained a qualification. If so, information on the name of the highest qualification obtained, the field of study, the institution from which it was granted, and the year obtained was collected to enable the coding of the highest qualification to a detailed classification incorporating both level and field of study.

### Type of questions

**Has the person completed a trade certificate or any other educational qualification since leaving school?**

- ( ) No. Go to ...  
 ( ) Yes, apprenticeship/trade certificate  
 ( ) Yes, other qualification

**What is the *highest* qualification that the person has completed since leaving school?**

- For example, trade certificate, bachelor degree, associate diploma, doctorate.

Full name of qualification

**What was the main field of study for the person's *highest* qualification completed?**

- For example, history, plumbing, primary school teaching.

Field of study

**From which institution was the person's *highest* qualification obtained?**

- If obtained overseas, also state country.

Name of institution

**In which year did the person complete their highest qualification?**

- ☐ Before 1961
- ☐ 1961-1970
- ☐ 1971-1980
- ☐ 1981-1985
- ☐ 1986-1992
- ☐ 1993-1994
- ☐ 1995-1996

### **User requirements**

Data on education qualifications are important for the assessment of the skill level of the labour force and are therefore valuable for the planning and implementation of labour force training programs. The Department of Employment, Education and Training uses the data also as a basis for the preparation of the 'Occupational Demand Schedule' for use by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs in recruiting skilled migrants.

Some users require data on level of qualifications as a general indicator of education advantage in a socioeconomic analysis of groups in the population.

For labour market analysis, level of qualification is of little use without knowledge about field of study. Field of study is required in considerable detail for studies of skill wastage or underutilisation, and for planning vocational education and training courses.

Data on year qualification obtained is vital in allowing an assessment of the rate at which qualified people move out of the occupations for which they were qualified, enter into other occupations or out of the labour force.

### **Non-Census data available**

Educational institutions collect details of qualifications awarded each year.

Data on leavers from schools, universities and other educational institutions are collected in population surveys run periodically by the ABS. Information on level of qualification and broad field of study are collected in an ABS survey on Labour Force Status and Educational Attainment conducted every February. While these surveys all provide useful education data, the use of sampling means that detailed field of study data and small area data cannot be made available.

### **Assessment**

The responses to name of institution are used only to assist in coding and will not be included in output.

Questions on qualifications suffer from a fairly high level of non-response particularly by those without formal qualifications. There are also coding problems with 'field of study' responses, particularly for overseas qualifications, qualifications obtained some time ago and where inadequate descriptions are provided by respondents.

Despite some problems with the data, qualifications information from the Census is very important given policy changes occurring in the area of education and training.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.

## LABOUR FORCE STATUS

### Historical background

Data on labour force status, employment status and status of workers have been obtained in every Australian Census since 1911. In recent Censuses, respondents were asked to answer a series of questions from which labour force status was derived.

For the 1986 and 1991 Censuses, the concepts used in the labour force questions were made more consistent with those used in ABS labour force surveys. A person was classified as unemployed if he or she actively looked for work in the last four weeks. They were also classified as to whether they were looking for full-time work or part-time work. Unpaid workers in a family business who worked at least 1 hour in the reference week were included in the labour force, whereas the previous cut-off was 15 hours.

### Type of questions

#### ***Last week, did the person have a full-time or part-time job of any kind?***

- Mark one box only.
- A job means any type of work including casual or temporary work or part-time work, if it was for one hour or more.

- ( ) Yes, worked for payment or profit
- ( ) Yes, but absent on holidays, on other leave, on strike or temporarily stood down
- ( ) Yes, unpaid work in a family business
- ( ) Yes, other unpaid work  
Go to ...
- ( ) No, did not have job  
Go to ...

#### ***Did the person actively look for work at any time in the last four weeks?***

- Examples of actively looking for work include:  
being registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service; checking or registering with any other employment agency; applying to an employer for work; or advertising for work.

- ( ) No, did not look for work  
Go to ...
- ( ) Yes, looked for full-time work
- ( ) Yes, looked for part-time work

#### ***In the main job held last week, was the person:***

- Mark one box only.
- If the person had more than one job last week then 'main job' refers to the job in which the person usually works the most hours.

- ( ) A wage or salary earner?
- ( ) A helper not receiving wages or temporarily stood down?
- Conducting own business in a limited liability company**
- ( ) With employees?
- ( ) Without employees?
- Conducting own business which is not a limited liability company**
- ( ) With employees?
- ( ) Without employees?

**If the person had found a job, could the person have started work last week?**

- ( ) Yes, could have started work last week
- ( ) No, already had a job to go to
- ( ) No, temporarily ill or injured
- ( ) No, other reason

### **Major Changes from 1991 questions**

For 1996, the question about availability to start work will also be asked in order that counts of unemployed persons in the Census will be more comparable to data collected in monthly Labour Force Surveys. The distinction between whether a person's own business was or was not a limited liability company has been added to increase the comparability of estimates of employees and self employed persons between the Census and the Labour Force Surveys.

### **User requirements**

The questions used to determine a person's labour force status enable:

- each person aged 15 years or over to be classified as in the labour force or not in the labour force;
- persons in the labour force to be classified as employed or unemployed, and
- employed persons to be classified as wage or salary earners, self-employed, employers or unpaid helpers in family businesses.

Users require these data to provide benchmarks for assessing labour force changes for small population groups and within small geographic areas. Because the Census provides small area data, analysis of the economic condition of small areas is possible. In addition, labour force participation rates can be determined for small groups of the population such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, migrants from particular countries, detailed age groups, etc. Conversely, it also provides data on those persons not in the labour force.

### **Non-Census data available**

ABS Monthly Labour Force Surveys provide data on labour force status of persons for States and a number of regions within States.

### **Assessment**

While regular ABS surveys provide data on the labour force status of persons, the need for such data at small area level and for small groups of the population can only be met by inclusion of the topic in the Census.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.

## OCCUPATION

### Historical background

A variety of questions on occupation has been included in all previous Censuses.

Occupation data were coded using the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) for the first time in 1986. An additional question on the main tasks or duties that a person usually performs in his or her job was also included to assist in the coding of occupations at the unit group level. These steps have considerably improved the quality of occupation data because ASCO is a classification which reflects modern occupations, the distribution of employed persons is spread more evenly throughout major groups and implementation has reduced significantly the number of occupations coded to 'not classifiable'.

### Type of questions

For persons aged 15 years or more and employed.

#### **In the main job held *last week*, what was the person's occupation?**

- Give full title.
- For example, Childcare Aide, Maths Teacher  
Pastrycook, Machine Operator.
- For public servants, state official designation and occupation. For armed services personnel, state rank and occupation.

Occupation

.....
.....
.....

#### **What are the main tasks that the person *himself/herself* usually performs in that occupation?**

- Give full details.
- For example, looking after children at day centre, teaching secondary school students, making cakes and pastries, operating wool combing machine.
- For managers, state main activities controlled.

Tasks or duties

.....
.....
.....
.....

### User requirements

Detailed occupation data are needed for analysing current and potential imbalances in the supply and demand for labour of varying skills, at the national, regional and local area level. These analyses provide the input to the development of policies and programs in the fields of education, training, immigration, industry and industrial relations and also for the monitoring of changes taking place in specific occupational labour markets. The usefulness of data on occupation is considerably enhanced when analysed with detailed data on industry of employment and qualifications.

Small area and regional data about the structure of the labour market are required for the purpose of advising Governments (at all levels) and their agencies responsible for delivering programs and providing services at a regional level.

**Non-Census data available**

A question on occupation is included each quarter in ABS Labour Force Surveys. Information is also available from ABS special supplementary surveys and professional registration boards.

**Assessment**

There are many important needs for occupation data at small area level and/or for finely classified occupations. Regular data on ASCO unit group occupations are available from the ABS Labour Force Surveys but some survey data can be subject to quite high sampling variability. Data from surveys are not available for small geographic areas.

The Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) is currently being reviewed in light of developments in the labour market. While possibly affecting coding the review will have no impact on question wording in the 1996 Census.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.



## INDUSTRY

### Historical background

A question on the industry of a person's employment has been included in one form or another in all Censuses. In recent Censuses, industry has been coded from the names and addresses of respondents' workplaces. Coding is assisted by the use of details of businesses on the central register of businesses maintained by the ABS. Use of the Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC) codes on the register of businesses provides for accurate coding of industry and consistency of the data with that from other ABS collections based on the register.

Responses to industry questions are separately used to code to industry sector (ie private or government). A direct question on the kind of industry, business or service carried out at the workplace has also been asked to assist coding in cases where the name and address of the respondent's workplace cannot be located on the ABS central register of businesses. Names and addresses of workplace are also used for the coding of work destination zones used in journey to work studies (see Journey to work).

### Type of questions

For persons aged 15 years or more and employed.

#### For the main job held *last week*, what was the employer's business name?

- For self-employed persons, print name of business.
- For teachers, print name of school.

Business or trading name

Division, Branch or  
Section (if any)

#### For the main job held *last week*, what was the employer's workplace address?

- For persons with no fixed place of work, provide address of depot or office.
- This information is used to accurately code the number of people employed in different industries

Street no. and name

Suburb or rural locality

City or town

State

Postcode

**What kind of industry, business or service is carried out *by the employer* at that address?**

- Describe as fully as possible, using two words or more, for example, dairy farming, footwear manufacturing.

Industry, business or service  
of employer

Information on employer's name is used solely to determine the industry classification and is not kept on Census computer records. Address is also used in identifying a general location (e.g. Central Business District) for journey to work coding. Only the general location code is kept on Census computer records.

### **User requirements**

Employment data by industry are needed for analysing and monitoring the rate of structural change in detailed industries at a national and local area level. Detailed analyses are undertaken on the demographic and labour force characteristics of employees in industries and in locations which are facing structural change. Recent examples of this are in the textile, steel and heavy engineering industries. The utility of data on industry is considerably enhanced when analysed with detailed data on occupation and qualifications.

Small area and regional data about the structure of the labour market are required for the purpose of advising Governments (at all levels), and their agencies responsible for delivering programs and providing services at a regional level.

Data on industry sector (i.e. whether establishment of employment is owned by one of the various levels of government or by the private sector) are used to assess the impact of government activity in small areas.

ABS has been asked to provide better sector statistics for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, in particular the coding of members of those populations participating in the Community Development Employment Program. Means of achieving this will be researched as part of form and coding design.

### **Non-Census data available**

The ABS Labour Force Survey each quarter asks employed persons for their industry of employment. Industry data at the ASIC group level are available quarterly from the Labour Force Survey, but some survey data can be subject to quite high sampling variability. Unemployed persons are asked each month their previous industry of employment. Personal characteristics of the employed and unemployed are collected each month from the Labour Force Survey.

The ABS undertakes a range of surveys of businesses collecting information on employment by industry. Only limited industry detail is available, and personal characteristics of workers are not collected. ABS economic Censuses also provide industry data but personal characteristics of the employed are not collected.

### **Assessment**

Intensive efforts were undertaken in processing the 1991 Census to maximise the use of the ABS central business register in determining the industry code. However, these efforts met with limited success and were a slight improvement on 1986 matching, with only about a third of total industry

responses being coded from this source. As the use of the ABS business register is an expensive option, work is continuing on assessing the impact on data quality in only using the kind of industry question to determine the industry code.

For the 1996 Census, industry data will be coded according to ANZSIC (Australian and New Zealand Standard Industry Classification) with a statistical link provided to enable users to compare the results with 1991 Census industry data.

Although a substantial amount of information on employment by industry is available from other ABS surveys and economic Censuses it is not available at the detailed level for most industries. Extensive industry restructuring is occurring, so data on the geographic distribution of industry employment is needed to monitor these changes.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.

## HOURS WORKED

### Historical Background

A question relating to the number of hours worked by employed persons has been asked in each Census since 1966. The question in 1966 related to the total hours worked in each job held last week. The question was expanded in 1971 and 1976 to include the main job and other job(s) held last week. Since 1981 respondents have been asked to indicate the appropriate ranges of hours worked in their main job only, as tests showed that the use of ranges for hours worked yielded more accurate answers.

The number of response categories in the hours worked question was increased in the 1986 Census. The 1981 category of '35 hours or more' was split into four categories (35-39, 40, 41-48, 49 or more). The categories are now comparable with those published for ABS labour force statistics.

### Type of question

**Last week, how many hours did the person work in all jobs?**

• Subtract any time off, add any overtime or extra time worked.

- ☐ None
- ☐ 1-15 hours
- ☐ 16-24 hours
- ☐ 25-34 hours
- ☐ 35-39 hours
- ☐ 40 hours
- ☐ 41-48 hours
- ☐ 49 hours or more

### Major Changes from 1991 question

For 1996 it is planned for the question to refer to all jobs, rather than being restricted to the main job, providing greater comparability with data from other sources.

### User requirements

Information on hours worked, preferably classified by industry and occupation, is required by labour market economists as it allows shifts in the labour force to be analysed within small geographic areas. It is also important for labour market analysts of small groups such as Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, migrants, sole parents and specific age groups.

Data on the extent of part-time employment are used in the study of changing work patterns, and growth in leisure. Information on hours worked is needed to estimate child care needs.

### Non-Census data available

Information is collected on hours worked as part of the monthly Labour Force Survey. Extensive information is also available from ABS employer surveys. Neither collection provides data for small population groups or small geographic areas.

**Assessment**

Census data on hours worked by employed persons are important for labour market analysis of small areas. The data are also important as a cross-classifier for labour force variables and for users to derive a classification of full/part time work. Survey data are inadequate for analyses for small areas or for small groups of the population.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.

## **JOURNEY TO WORK**

### **Historical Background**

The questions which enable the derivation of journey to work have been included since the 1971 Census.

### **Type of question**

There is no specific question addressing this topic. Rather "Journey to work" is a topic derived from coding of address of usual residence and address of place of work to obtain origins and destinations of employed persons travelling to work.

### **User requirements**

The coding of addresses of places of work to destination zones allows Census data to be produced on journey to work patterns and on daytime populations of employed persons. Journey to work data are required by transport authorities for the analysis of travel patterns within major metropolitan areas, the modelling of fuel usage, the forecasting of public transport patronage and the analysis of catchment areas for transport routes. The data also assist policy makers in the planning of transport systems, industrial developments and the release of residential and industrial land.

Information on daytime populations is required for analysis of the distribution of industry across regions and for the planning of private and public facilities in employment centres.

Requests have been made for data on the time taken to travel to work.

### **Non-Census data available**

No data are available on this topic for small areas from other ABS sources. Some information on commuting times in Adelaide, Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney is included in the report "Housing: Characteristics and Decisions" (ABS Cat No 8710.0). Some information is available from results of the 1992 Time Use Survey.

### **Assessment**

Detailed data on the direction and magnitude of journeys are required for both transport and land use planning. Daytime population figures are important for those planning facilities in employment centres. Journeys to and from work form the largest proportion of the total number of journeys and are concentrated in the peak periods which place the critical load on transport systems.

Collection of data on time taken to travel to work would require a new question. Given other data sources such as the Time Use Survey, the case for such a question is not strong enough.

Journey to work data will be produced at the Statistical Local Area level. State transport authorities will be approached at a later stage to discuss arrangements for producing data for destination zones smaller than Statistical Local Areas.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.

## MODE OF TRAVEL TO WORK

### Historical Background

A question on mode of travel to work was asked for the first time in the 1976 Census. It has been asked in all subsequent Censuses with slight modifications. The option 'walked only' was included in 1986.

### Type of question

For persons aged 15 years or more and employed.

#### How did the person get to work on Tuesday, 6 August 1996?

- If the person uses more than one method of travel to work, mark all relevant boxes.

- ☐ Train
- ☐ Bus
- ☐ Ferry or tram
- ☐ Taxi
- ☐ Car - as driver
- ☐ Car - as passenger
- ☐ Motorbike or motor scooter
- ☐ Bicycle
- ☐ Walked only
- ☐ Worked at home
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Did not go to work

### User requirements

Users have indicated that data on mode of travel to work are fundamental to journey to work analysis and to transport planning in general. Data are also used to:

- . identify public transport customer groups;
- . measure public transport patronage; and
- . assist in energy conservation studies.

### Non-Census data available

No ABS surveys provide this information. Some information is available from public transport records.

### Assessment

Mode of travel to work data are mainly used in conjunction with journey to work data for transport planning. For example, it helps identify public and private transport usage between particular origins and destinations and can be used in assessing car parking requirements. Few alternatives to Census data exist for this topic.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.

## INCOME (Individual)

### Historical background

A question on income was first asked in the 1933 Census in an attempt to measure the effects of the Depression. It was re-included in 1976 and for all subsequent Censuses. Each person is asked to indicate the range within which their gross income from all sources lies. Statistics on family and household income are derived from personal income data.

### Type of question

**What is the gross income (including pensions and allowances) that the person usually receives each week from all sources?**

• **Count all income including:**

family allowance  
family allowance supplement  
pensions  
unemployment benefits  
student allowance  
maintenance  
(child support)  
worker's compensation  
superannuation  
wages  
salary  
overtime  
dividends  
rents received  
business or farm income  
(less expenses of operation)  
interest received.

• **Do not deduct:**

tax  
superannuation  
health insurance.

- ☐ More than \$1,346 per week  
(more than \$70,000 per year)
- ☐ \$1,155 - \$1,346 per week  
(\$60,001 - \$70,000 per year)
- ☐ \$962 - \$1,154 per week  
(\$50,001 - \$60,000 per year)
- ☐ \$770 - \$961 per week  
(\$40,001 - \$50,000 per year)
- ☐ \$674 - \$769 per week  
(\$35,001 - \$40,000 per year)
- ☐ \$578 - \$673 per week  
(\$30,001 - \$35,000 per year)
- ☐ \$482 - \$577 per week  
(\$25,001 - \$30,000 per year)
- ☐ \$386 - \$481 per week  
(\$20,001 - \$25,000 per year)
- ☐ \$309 - \$385 per week  
(\$16,001 - \$20,000 per year)
- ☐ \$231 - \$308 per week  
(\$12,001 - \$16,000 per year)
- ☐ \$155 - \$230 per week  
(\$8,001 - \$12,000 per year)
- ☐ \$97 - \$154 per week  
(\$5,001 - \$8,000 per year)
- ☐ \$58 - \$96 per week  
(\$3,001 - \$5,000 per year)
- ☐ \$1 - \$57 per week  
(\$1 - \$3,000 per year)
- ☐ Nil income
- ☐ Negative income

### Major Changes from 1991 question

Subject to further testing, categories for nil income and negative income will be provided. To ensure that the presence of the 'nil income' category does not bias the results it is planned to show the highest categories first.

Response categories will be adjusted to allow for the effect of changes in incomes since the 1991 Census.



## **User requirements**

Information on the income levels of various small groups of the population and the geographic distribution is used in public and private sector planning activities. In particular it helps identify the location of the disadvantaged for the planning of social services. Broad income is a useful indicator of socio-economic status and hence is used extensively. It is often cross-classified with other Census variables.

## **Non-Census data available**

Data on income are available from surveys of income and household expenditure conducted regularly by the ABS. A question on income is usually asked in most household surveys for use as a classificatory variable. Family income and type of income unit are separate variables available from these surveys.

## **Assessment**

Testing of the topic has shown that there is a general tendency among respondents to understate their income. In particular social welfare payments (e.g. family allowances) and investment income such as rent and interest are often omitted. Similarly, pensioners sometimes state that they receive no income as they do not regard their pension as income.

In spite of a non-response rate higher than most other Census questions, and a clear tendency for income to be understated, the income topic is sufficiently important as a data item in its own right and as a cross-classifier for inclusion in the Census. The Census enables data on income for small areas and small groups of the population to be produced to supplement the detailed data available from regular surveys for large groups and areas.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## **6. HOUSEHOLD AND DWELLING TOPICS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE 1996 CENSUS**

The following topics relating to households and dwellings will be included in the 1996 Census:

### **Household**

- Address on Census night
- Family relationship
- Income (family, household)
- Motor vehicles (number garaged)
- Number of bedrooms
- Nature of occupancy (type of tenure)
- Rent
- Housing loan repayments

### **Dwelling**

- Structure of private dwelling (classification)
- Location of private dwelling (classification)
- Non-private dwelling and caravan park (classification)

The 1996 Census will include several enhancements which are expected to improve data relating to families, households and dwellings. These are detailed under the particular topics.

A change affecting many of these topics is the treatment of people in self-contained dwellings within retirement villages and aged persons complexes. In past Censuses people in such arrangements were counted as occupants of a non-private dwelling. For the 1996 Census they will, subject to further testing, be enumerated using the same procedures as people in private dwellings.

## ADDRESS ON CENSUS NIGHT

### Historical background

Census counts classified by statistical areas where persons spent Census night are available from every national Census.

### Type of question

**At what address did this household spend Census Night  
6 August 1996?**

Street no. and name

Suburb or rural locality

City or town

Postcode

### Justification

The majority of Census output is available on a place of enumeration basis for individual Collection Districts (CDs) and aggregations thereof. These aggregations include Local Government Areas and (CD derived) Postcodes. Household address on Census night is used to confirm the geographic code allocated to the household.

Household address on Census night is also essential for the conduct of the post-enumeration survey which measures the level of underenumeration in the Census. Estimates of underenumeration are essential for revision of the Estimated Resident Populations of States, Territories and Local Government Areas.

### Assessment

Household address on Census night is essential for the conduct of an accurate Census. Confidentiality of the data provided is carefully guarded and the information is not kept on computer files. No identifiable information about an individual is made available to any other person, government agency or private organisation.

## FAMILY RELATIONSHIP

### Historical background

Information on relationships between persons in a household is used to identify different types of household and family groups within households. A question on relationship has been included in all Australian Censuses.

Several improvements have been made to Census data on families and households in recent Censuses. The expression "Household Head" was removed as it was not always clearly understood. A question allowing for the identification of de facto living arrangements has been included since 1986. Statistics on children in blended families are also now more readily available. Since the 1986 Census data on the family structure of persons in caravans and mobile homes in caravan parks and houseboats in marinas have been captured. Overstatement of the number of single parent families due to temporarily absent partners has been reduced due to the improvement of data on the usual residence of family members.

### Type of questions

	PERSON 2	PERSON 3
<b>What is each person's relationship to Person 1/Person 2</b>		
Examples of other relationships: son-in-law, granddaughter, uncle, boarder.	<input type="checkbox"/> Husband or wife of Person 1 <input type="checkbox"/> De facto partner of Person 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Child of Person 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Stepchild of Person 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Brother or sister of Person 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Unrelated flatmate or co-tenant of Person 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Other relationship to Person 1 - please specify	<input type="checkbox"/> Child of both Person 1 and Person 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Child of Person 1 only <input type="checkbox"/> Child of Person 2 only <input type="checkbox"/> Brother or sister of Person 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Unrelated flatmate or co-tenant of Person 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Other relationship to Person 1 - please specify
	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
<b>Are there any persons who usually live in this household who were absent on the night of .....</b> ? <input type="checkbox"/> No. Go to ... <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Please complete one separate column for each person absent		
<b>Name of each person who usually lives in this household but was not here on the night of .....</b> ?	First or given name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Surname or Family name <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
Is the person male or female? *		
Age last birthday *		
What is the person's relationship * to Person 1 (as listed on page 1)?	* See relevant topics for details	
Is the person a full-time student? *		

## **User requirements**

Questions on this topic allow the identification of different types of households and the structure of family groups within each household. Statistics relating to families and households are required at small area level and over time at this level for the development, implementation and monitoring of many social and economic policies.

## **Non-Census data available**

Data on family structure are available from many ABS household surveys. However, because of restricted sample sizes, surveys do not provide reliable data for small areas and small groups of the population which are needed for many purposes.

## **Assessment**

Data on households and families are of great value in their own right, and are even more valuable when cross-classified with other variables. Detailed data are only available from the Census and provide a benchmark for the analysis of changing family structures and characteristics over time.

Improvements in coding procedures have enhanced the quality of family data from the 1986 and 1991 Censuses. The ABS anticipates further improvements in statistics on families through the inclusion of family data for people living in self-contained dwellings within retirement villages.

An additional question is being considered for 1996 asking about relationships to household members other than Person 1. If results of testing are favourable the new question will be included to provide more accurate family coding.

Same sex relationships will be recorded where people identify such relationships.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.

**INCOME (FAMILY, HOUSEHOLD)**

More details on the definition of income are included in the section on personal topics.

Family and Household income are derived from data on individual incomes of members of families and households. Only the incomes of persons present on Census night are included because of the collection and processing difficulties involved in accounting for persons temporarily absent. A statistical method will be devised to derive family and household income from individuals' income which are reported in ranges.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.

## MOTOR VEHICLES (NUMBER GARAGED)

### Historical background

A question on the number of vehicles was first asked in the 1966 Census. Since 1976, households have been asked to record the number of registered motor vehicles owned or used by members of the household garaged at or near their dwelling.

### Type of question

**How many registered motor vehicles owned or used by members of this household were garaged or parked at or near this dwelling on Census night?**

- ☐ None
- ☐ 1 motor vehicle
- ☐ 2 motor vehicles
- ☐ 3 motor vehicles
- ☐ 4 motor vehicles or more

- . Exclude motor bikes, motor scooters, tractors.
- . Include company vehicles kept at home.

### User Requirements

Information on the number of vehicles garaged at dwellings is required for transport modelling, town planning, market research and as an important social and economic indicator. Data on the distribution of vehicles are important for indicating needs such as parking and public transport. It is particularly important in identifying the mobility of particular segments of the population when cross-classified with other characteristics.

### Non-Census Data available

A range of statistics on motor vehicles is available from the ABS's Survey of Motor Vehicle Usage, and Household Expenditure Survey as well as Motor Vehicle Registration records. These collections, however, do not allow extensive cross-classification of vehicle counts with the characteristics of their owners. Some small area data are available from motor vehicle registration statistics.

### Assessment

While the ABS initially recommended excluding this topic from the 1996 Census the strength of submissions by numerous users persuaded the ABS that the topic should be retained. It is a significant part of a 'package' of transport related Census topics (Journey to Work and Mode of Travel to Work) and has an important place in transport and town planning. Users have indicated a need for such data at a small area level. It also serves as a useful socio-economic indicator. Because of the variety of needs demonstrated by users this topic will be included in the 1996 Census.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## NUMBER OF BEDROOMS

### Historical background

A question on number of rooms/bedrooms has been included in every Australian Census since 1911.

While the 1986 Census household form asked householders to indicate the numbers of various room types, only the number of bedrooms was entered into the computer record. A review of the processing budget resulted in the total number of rooms not being captured because of the high cost of deriving the total.

The 1991 Census collected data on the number of bedrooms only.

### Type of question

#### How many bedrooms are there in this household's dwelling ?

- ☐ None
- ☐ 1 bedroom
- ☐ 2 bedrooms
- ☐ 3 bedrooms
- ☐ 4 bedrooms
- ☐ 5 bedrooms or more

### User requirements

A question on number of rooms/bedrooms is required:

- to provide some indication of dwelling size, and
- to provide an indication of overcrowding by calculating occupancy ratios (i.e. the number of people per room/bedroom).

Small area level data on occupancy ratios are required as a broad measure of housing standards when assessing the nature and utilisation of the Australian housing stock. Data on the number of bedrooms are one of several factors used to calculate weights for the rent and mortgage component of the Consumer Price Index.

Virtually all user requirements are met by a question on the number of bedrooms.

### Non-Census data available

Data on number of bedrooms are available from the 1985-86 Income Survey, 1988-89 Household Expenditure Survey, 1988 Survey of Housing and 1990 Survey on Income and Housing Costs and Amenities.

### Assessment

Tests have found that the understanding of a question on number of rooms varies because:

- respondents incorrectly count rooms such as kitchens and bathrooms as 'other rooms';
- respondents have difficulty in recording the number of rooms they use for several purposes (e.g. bedroom/study), often double counting a room; and



- the concept is not usually relevant for tents and caravans and there is considerable incorrect inclusion of the communal bathrooms, toilets and laundries associated with these dwellings.

Housing authorities and other users of statistics have indicated that data of this kind are needed as a measure of overcrowding and of the adequacy of dwelling stock. While a small number of users would prefer a question on number of rooms, given the definitional problems and extra costs involved with such a question, data on number of bedrooms are acceptable. Data on number of bedrooms are required at small area level.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## NATURE OF OCCUPANCY (TYPE OF TENURE)

### Historical background

Data about whether a dwelling is owned, being purchased or rented have been obtained in all Censuses since 1911.

From 1971 until 1991, the information on nature of occupancy was derived from the answers to more than one question.

### Type of question

#### Is the household's dwelling:

- . Owners include owners of caravans or manufactured homes regardless of whether or not the site is owned.
- . "Other" includes households with life tenure in a Retirement Village.

- ( ) Fully owned by this household? Go to ..
- ( ) Being purchased by this household? Go to ..
- ( ) Being purchased under a rent/buy scheme?
- ( ) Being rented by this household
- ( ) Being occupied rent -free by this household? Go to ..
- ( ) Other?

### Major Change from 1991 questions

For 1996, a single direct question is being tested. The proposal involves a more detailed classification to cater for a greater variety of tenancy/financial arrangements.

### User requirements

Nature of occupancy (whether a dwelling is rented, owned or being purchased) is a characteristic used to classify a range of other Census data about households and dwellings. Data classified in this way are needed to monitor housing security, mobility issues and home ownership trends, and to develop housing and social welfare policies.

### Non-Census data available

Data on nature of occupancy are available from:

- 1988 Housing Survey;
- 1990 Income and Housing Survey;
- 1993 Rental Investors Survey.

Further data will be provided from:

- 1994 Australian Housing Survey;
- a continuous Income and Housing Survey planned to commence in 1994.

### Assessment

Information about the proportions of housing owned, being purchased or rented and about the characteristics of associated households is very important to both government and the private sector.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.

## RENT

### Historical background

Weekly rent paid for each dwelling has been asked in every Australian Census since 1911. In 1947 householders were also asked to indicate whether the dwelling was rented furnished or unfurnished. Since 1971, in addition to stating the weekly rent and whether the dwelling was furnished or unfurnished, householders have been asked to indicate the type of landlord.

In 1991 rent payments were collected in ranges.

### Type of questions

<b>How much are the household's payments for this dwelling?</b>	
. Include rent and mortgage repayments and site fees if caravan or manufactured home in caravan or manufactured home park . Exclude water rates, council rates, etc. . If no payments please write NIL.	\$[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] per week <b>OR</b> \$[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] per fortnight <b>OR</b> \$[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] per month
<b>Is the household's dwelling:</b>	
. Owners include owners of caravans or manufactured homes regardless of whether or not the site is owned. . "Other" includes households with life tenure in a Retirement Village.	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully owned by this household? <b>Go to ..</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Being purchased by this household? <b>Go to ..</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Being purchased under a rent/buy scheme? <input type="checkbox"/> Being rented by this household <input type="checkbox"/> Being occupied rent -free by this household? <b>Go to ..</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Other?
<b>If the household's dwelling is being rented, to whom is rent paid?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Real estate agent or private landlord not in the same household <input type="checkbox"/> State Housing Commission or Trust <input type="checkbox"/> Community or co-operative housing group <input type="checkbox"/> Employer - Government <input type="checkbox"/> Employer - other <input type="checkbox"/> Other
<b>If the household's dwelling is being rented, was it furnished by the landlord?</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, fully furnished <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, partly furnished <input type="checkbox"/> No, unfurnished.

### Major Changes from 1991 questions

Because of the emergence of rent-buy arrangements a new approach to collecting this data is required.

Because of strong user needs for actual amounts of rent paid, testing is being undertaken of a question to achieve this instead of the range data obtained in the 1991 Census. Nature of occupancy responses will be used to determine whether payments are recorded as rent or loan repayments. The questions being tested also ask for more detail concerning type of landlord to whom rent is paid.

### **User requirements**

Users have indicated that rental data is important for housing policy planning in Australia. In particular, rental information produced from the Census aids in the identification of housing needs and of the extent to which specific groups (e.g. low income households, aged persons and indigenous people) have access to adequate housing.

Rent data from the Census are used by the ABS in calculating estimates of imputed rent for the National Accounts and checking the representativeness of dwelling samples used in the Consumer Price Index.

Used in conjunction with income, rent data provide an indication of disposable income.

Users also have a need for rental information classified between government and private landlords and whether rented as furnished or unfurnished.

### **Non-Census data available**

Data on rent are available from:

- 1988-89 Household Expenditure Survey
- 1990 Income and Housing Survey
- 1992 Survey of Families in Australia.

The ABS will be undertaking a continuous Income and Housing Survey from July 1994.

- Because of small sample sizes, surveys cannot provide small area data.

### **Assessment**

The Census is the only source of rent data for small areas and for small groups of the population. Such data are important for housing policy-making and planning, and for studying the housing conditions of minority populations.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.

## HOUSING LOAN REPAYMENTS

### Historical background

A question on mortgage was asked for the first time in the 1976 Census. The question was simplified for the 1981 Census to ask only whether there was a mortgage and the monthly payments on the total mortgage on the dwelling. Since the 1986 Census, the question has asked the monthly payment being made on the loan(s) for the dwelling.

### Type of questions

<b>How much are the household's payments for this dwelling?</b>	
. Include rent and mortgage repayments and site fees if caravan or manufactured home in caravan or manufactured home park . Exclude water rates, council rates, etc. . If no payments please write NIL.	\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> per week <b>or</b> \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> per fortnight <b>or</b> \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> per month
<b>Is the household's dwelling:</b>	
. Owners include owners of caravans or manufactured homes regardless of whether or not the site is owned. . "Other" includes households with life tenure in a Retirement Village.	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully owned by this household? Go to .. <input type="checkbox"/> Being purchased by this household? Go to .. <input type="checkbox"/> Being purchased under a rent/buy scheme? <input type="checkbox"/> Being rented by this household <input type="checkbox"/> Being occupied rent -free by this household? Go to .. <input type="checkbox"/> Other?

### Major Changes from 1991 questions

Because of the emergence of rent-buy arrangements a new approach to collecting this data is required.

Because of strong user need for actual amounts of loan repayments, testing is being undertaken of a question to achieve this instead of the range data obtained in the 1991 Census. Nature of occupancy responses will be used to determine whether payments are recorded as rent or loan repayments.

### User requirements

Users require data on housing loan repayments classified by household characteristics to measure access to home ownership and provide benchmark data for evaluation of housing needs, housing finance and housing demand. Regional and small area (local government area) data are required.

Used in conjunction with income, housing loan repayment data provide an indication of disposable income.

### Non-Census data available

Data on housing loan repayments are available from:

- 1988-89 Household Expenditure Survey
- 1990 Income and Housing Survey

- 1992 Survey of Families in Australia

The ABS is also undertaking a continuous Income and Housing Survey from 1994.

Because of small sample sizes, surveys cannot provide small area data.

### **Assessment**

The Census is the only source of housing loan repayments data for small areas and small groups of the population. Such data are important for housing policy-making and planning, and for studying the housing conditions of minority populations.

To be included in Second Release - see page 7.

## STRUCTURE OF PRIVATE DWELLING (CLASSIFICATION)

### Historical background

A question on class of dwelling was asked in every Australian Census from 1911 through to 1966. In 1971, respondents were presented with a sketch to indicate which classification best described their dwelling. In 1976 both respondents and collectors had to provide details of structure, and since then Census collectors only have been asked to provide this information.

Caravans have been included as a response option since 1961. However, caravans in caravan parks were first enumerated with household forms in 1986 to enable statistics to be produced for the first time on the family structure of persons residing in caravan parks.

Traditionally the Census has defined a dwelling as the space occupied by a household. Therefore, where a dwelling unit was shared by more than a single household, the procedure has led to an overcount of dwellings. To measure this effect, attempts have been made to identify dwellings that comprised a sharing of private house or flat (1954, 1976) or in which a kitchen or bathroom was shared (1971, 1976). However, the quality of response to these questions was poor.

The 1991 Census collected some information on the number of storeys in flats, apartments and semi-detached houses.

### Type of question (Answered by collector)

#### Dwelling Structure

<input type="checkbox"/> Separate house
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc. <input type="checkbox"/> 1 storey <input type="checkbox"/> 2 or more storeys
Flat or apartment <input type="checkbox"/> In a 1 or 2 storey block <input type="checkbox"/> In a 3 storey block <input type="checkbox"/> In a 4 or more storey block <input type="checkbox"/> Attached to a house
<input type="checkbox"/> Caravan, tent, cabin etc. in caravan park <input type="checkbox"/> Caravan not in caravan park, houseboat etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Improvised home, campers out <input type="checkbox"/> House or flat attached to a shop, office etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Household within a dwelling

### Major Change from 1991 question

In order to obtain a more accurate count of separate dwellings, procedures are again being tested for collectors to identify situations where more than one household occupy a single dwelling.

### User requirements

Users require data in terms of the types of private dwelling structure for the analysis of personal and household (including family) characteristics in relation to the physical structure that houses

them and for providing the benchmark for regular estimates of the different types of housing available.

Since arrangements for the 1991 Census were completed, new initiatives in housing policy such as the National Housing Strategy have strengthened the need for detailed information about Australia's housing stock.

The results are used:

- to determine changes in housing patterns;
- to review existing housing stock for use in housing policy advice;
- for land use forecasting; and
- for transport planning.

#### **Non-Census data available**

The ABS conducts a quarterly Building Activity Collection which provides data on additions to the stock of private dwellings. Information on type of dwelling has also been collected in housing and energy surveys conducted by ABS.

#### **Assessment**

There is a strong user demand for data on dwelling structure, especially at small area level and for small groups of the population, to determine urban form and density. The question is answered by the collector which contributes marginally to collection costs but requires no response by the public.

Users and collectors reported problems with the 1986 Census classification and a revision of the classification was introduced in 1991 which provided more detail and put Census data about dwelling structure on the same basis as population surveys and building statistics.

With the greater importance placed on data about the stock of dwellings there is a need for the Census to more accurately count the number of physical dwelling units, particularly at the small area level.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.



## **LOCATION OF PRIVATE DWELLING (CLASSIFICATION)**

For 1996 it is proposed to classify private dwellings according to whether they are located in caravan parks (or marinas), manufactured home estates, retirement villages or elsewhere.

On the basis of this information, both dwelling and household data will be able to be classified according to the type of location.

### **Background**

Historically, retirement villages, caravan parks etc. have been regarded as non-private dwellings and the full range of Census data has not always been collected from the occupants although since 1986 this has been the case for caravan parks and marinas. Also in recent Censuses there has been some confusion as to how to treat structures such as 'separate houses' within such complexes with the result that treatment of retirement villages etc. has not been consistent.

Also there has been an increase in the number of households residing in these kinds of accommodation, for example, the aging of Australia's population has led to an increase in the number of retirement villages and rising house prices have forced more households to seek alternatives to the conventional suburban dwelling such as permanent dwellings in caravan parks and manufactured home estates. Although household data have been collected for households in caravan parks since the 1986 Census, separate houses (such as caretaker/managers cottages, manufactured homes) within the confines of the park may not always have been classified as such.

This new classification is designed to complement the existing private dwelling structure classification and enable the ABS to meet user requirements for data about these alternative forms of housing and their occupants.

### **User requirements**

With the aging of the Australian population, there is a strong demand for information about retirement villages for social policy and planning purposes; the number of such villages (supply of aged persons' housing) and characteristics of people in aged persons' housing, which has not been able to be provided from existing collections. With the introduction of the location classification it will be possible to provide data about self-contained dwellings and people in retirement villages.

There are similar needs for data about the people and housing in caravan parks and manufactured home estates.

### **Non-Census data available**

None.

### **Assessment**

This new classification along with the Private Dwelling Structure Classification will enable users to separately identify these special populations and it will greatly assist both government, in the development of policies related to these groups and their housing, and the private sector in making informed decisions about these groups. The data will also be used by government and the private sector to assess supply/demand issues.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## **NON-PRIVATE DWELLING AND CARAVAN PARK (CLASSIFICATION)**

### **Historical background**

Non-private dwellings have been enumerated and classified in all Australian Censuses since Federation. In the 1986 and 1991 Censuses, caravan parks were enumerated using household forms rather than personal forms to enable statistics to be produced on families residing in caravan parks.

In the 1986 and 1991 Censuses there was some difficulty in the consistent treatment of self-contained dwellings within retirement villages.

### **Type of question**

Information required for the classification of non-private dwellings is collected from persons-in-charge. A list of non-private dwellings is compiled prior to the Census based on those identified in the previous Census, those identified as part of ABS's population survey operations and from information provided by relevant government departments. This list is used to improve coverage of non-private dwellings.

### **User requirements**

Information on non-private dwellings and caravan parks is required for:

- analysis of programs for the aged and disabled;
- policy analysis and policy formulation in the development and financing of projects in the areas of health, the aged, children and rehabilitation; and
- better planning of services for residents of caravan parks.

### **Non-Census data available**

Government departments have information on government funded institutions although generally only limited details are available on the characteristics of residents.

### **Assessment**

The classification of non-private dwellings is dependent on the perceptions of persons-in-charge and arrangements made for collecting data. As a result, information about non-private dwellings and persons in such dwellings is less accurate than that for private dwellings.

Nevertheless, Census data about persons residing in non-private dwellings is important for planning and delivery of many services.

For 1996 it is proposed to extend family coding to cover people living in self-contained units within retirement villages.

To be included in First Release - see page 7.

## **7. TOPICS EXCLUDED FROM THE 1996 CENSUS**

This chapter identifies both those topics which attracted considerable discussion and were ultimately excluded, and those which were initially recommended for exclusion and for which no significant case was put:

- Disability
- Ancestry/Ethnic origin
- Unpaid work/Usual major activity
- Reason dwelling unoccupied
- Year first married
- Whether married more than once

## **DISABILITY**

### **Historical background**

In the 1911, 1921 and 1933 Australian Censuses respondents were asked to indicate whether they were deaf, dumb or blind. A more general question on the effect of disabilities was asked in 1976.

### **User requirements**

Data are required for developing Federal and State Government policies and community based programs. While much of these data are only required for large geographic areas, detailed data at the small area level are required for planning service delivery.

### **Non-Census data available**

Surveys on disability were conducted by the ABS in 1981, 1988 and in 1993.

These surveys on disability were comprehensive in scope and provide detailed information about disability in Australia and individual States. The surveys asked a range of demographic questions similar to those asked in the Census, and as such provide a range of disability data cross-tabulated with age, sex, education, employment and household characteristics. Although small-area data are not available, most other requests for disability data can be met by information from the survey.

The Time Use Survey conducted in 1992 also included some questions to identify persons in the household with disabilities. The 1993 Household Expenditure Survey also includes a module of questions to identify persons with a disability or handicap in households and the forthcoming National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey will also include questions to identify disability and severe handicap for this population.

Data are available from the Department of Social Security in relation to recipients of invalid pensions, sickness benefits, child disability allowance and mobility allowance. Data are available for postcode areas and social security regions for the first three types of recipient. However, not all persons with disabilities receive an invalid pension.

-

### **Experience in other countries**

Statistical agencies in a number of developing countries asked questions on disability in their Censuses during the early 1980s. The questions were similar to those asked in Australia in 1911, 1921 and 1933. In such countries the Census forms specify obvious and clear-cut disabilities such as blindness, deaf-mutism and the loss of the use of arms and legs. Given the complexity of disability as recognised by Australian society and as reported by recent ABS Surveys, this approach is not appropriate to Australia in the 1990s. Nor does it meet user requirements.

Statistical agencies in most industrialised countries either do not ask a disability question, or have experienced serious data quality problems when they have. A review of information on disabilities from Censuses in other countries has shown that the information so obtained is unreliable for most practical applications.

### **Canada**

Experience in recent Canadian Censuses and subsequent household surveys has found that many people who were entitled to do so were reluctant to consider themselves as disabled. On the other hand, other people who did not suffer from disabling conditions chose to identify themselves as being disabled. The 1986 post Census survey showed that about 20% of people indicating that they had a disability in the 1986 Census were not in fact classified as disabled according to the criteria used in the Health and Activity Limitation Survey (HALS). Likewise a very significant proportion

of people (about 40%) with a disability had in fact *not* identified themselves as disabled in the Census. The combination of false positive *and* negative responses has rendered Census data unreliable for publication at any geographic level. Canadian data on disability, collected on a sample basis, is only used as a means of increasing the efficiency of the follow-up survey (HALS).

### United States

The US Bureau of the Census asked questions in 1990 on the effect on mobility, self-care and employment of physical, mental or other health conditions lasting more than six months. The concept of "health condition" is largely self defining except for the reference to the duration of the condition. Neither the specific condition nor the severity of the disability are specified. The question is only asked of a sample of persons. Output from the 1990 US Census identifies percentages of persons over the age of 15 with work, mobility or self-care limitations.

When a sample of Census responses were matched against those from the 1990 Content Reinterview Survey (the US equivalent of the post enumeration survey) false negative responses were found to range from 41 to 63% depending on age and the type of limitation; false positives were 32 to 83%. Such discrepancies between the survey and Census data highlight the difficulties in obtaining reliable data on this topic through self-enumeration. More specific data on disability are collected in the US through the Surveys of Income and Program Participation.

### United Kingdom

In 1989 the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) in the United Kingdom conducted a Census Test which included a question on disability. Test results indicated a high degree of non-response and poor data quality and consequently the topic was not included in the 1990 Census. The OPCS elected to include a question on long term illness in place of a disability question. Such a question is not required by users in Australia.

### Assessment

The preliminary ABS recommendation was to exclude a question on disability unless questions could be designed to overcome past data quality problems or to identify specific groups within the disabled population on which higher quality data can be obtained. After considerable consultation with users the ABS agreed to field test questions which would identify people with a severe/profound handicap. It was anticipated that aiming at this group in the disabled population would produce reliable data since it was thought many of the data quality problems experienced overseas related to persons with a low or moderate level of handicap.

Results from field testing have indicated that a high proportion of responses are either false negatives (those categorised as having a severe or profound handicap in the follow-up survey but not in the Census test) or false positives (those categorised as having a severe or profound handicap in the Census test but not in the follow-up survey). These results do *not* cancel each other out as field testing has shown that the proportion of false negative responses (62% of people defined as severely handicapped) was double the number of false positives (31%). The extent to which inappropriate answers were given varied depending on factors such as age, proficiency in English and the type of medical condition.

While the ABS appreciates the need for small area data on disabilities the problem of obtaining *reliable* data through self-enumeration remains. The ABS is currently undertaking research (funded under the Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement) aimed at producing synthetic estimates of the disabled population by severity of handicap at an intermediate geographic level. The ABS considers this approach will lead to useful estimates that address many user needs for low geographic level data.

Questions on disability will not be included in the 1996 Census.

## ANCESTRY/ETHNIC ORIGIN

### Historical Background

A question on each person's ancestry was asked for the first time in the 1986 Census. This was the result of investigation by the 1986 Population Census Ethnicity Committee on the need for data on ethnicity other than language, birthplace or birthplace of parents. The question was designed to identify the respondent's origin rather than a subjective perception of their ethnic background. Even so, some subjectivity was involved because of broad interpretations of what the term ancestry means or confusion as to what was required.

Evaluation of the 1986 Census results found ancestry data did not add to data already obtained on language and birthplace for very many cultural groups. However, it did provide some additional information on some cultural groups, members of which are born in many countries (eg: people of Chinese and Indian ancestry) or distinct groupings within a country (eg: Maoris as a subset of people born in New Zealand; Kurds as a subset of people born in Iraq). The additional information was less useful where the person had already indicated use of a language spoken by the cultural group (eg: Cantonese or Hindi).

Ancestry also proved to be a costly topic to code.

### User Requirements

Data on ethnicity are used for the planning of services for ethnically based community groups, the development of language policies and as a means of measuring social change. To date these needs have been largely met by the six existing questions on language, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, birthplace of the person or their parents, citizenship and religion. A response to a question on a person's ancestry may provide information on their history but does not necessarily identify their current ethnic affiliation. However, submissions were made requesting a repeat of the 1986 Census ancestry question to identify those for whom the ancestry question added information.

Because the inclusion of the 1986 Census ancestry question would cost \$1.2m and because there are doubts about the additional value of this question over the existing six questions on cultural background, the ABS agreed to conduct field testing on alternative questions on ethnic origin which would be less costly than the 1986 question but which would provide quality data.

Two forms of the ancestry question have been tested in the field to determine if a better question than the one used in 1986 could be used to identify specific ethnic groups not adequately identified by language and birthplace questions.

### Assessment

Results from field testing of both these questions have demonstrated that a very high proportion of people either do not answer the question or simply respond "Australian" as their ancestry. The proportion of respondents identifying their ancestry as Australian - explicitly or by derivation - was *more than double* the proportion doing so in 1986. The test found that many people born in Australia with one or both parents born overseas indicated that their ancestry was the same as their country of birth (ie: Australia). While this may reflect the respondents' self-identification it also reflects an inaccurate interpretation of the word ancestry.

A proportion of respondents to the test who were contacted indicated that the concept of ancestry is neither clearly understood nor interpreted consistently in the general community.

Results from the test indicate that the quality of data from either form of the ancestry question as tested is likely to be far less useful than results from the 1986 form of the question. The cost of collecting and processing data on ancestry cannot be justified given the limited additional

information it might collect and the already significant investment made by the ABS in collecting more objective measures of ethnicity.

A question on ancestry will not be included in the 1996 Census.

## **UNPAID WORK/USUAL MAJOR ACTIVITY**

### **Historical Background**

Prior to the 1987 Time Use Pilot Survey (Sydney, May-June 1987) information on time use in Australia was very limited. Some time use, or "time budget" surveys had been conducted during the 1970s and 1980s but were based on small samples and limited geographic areas or specific social groups. The ABS recognised the growing interest but limited availability of time use data and conducted both the 1987 pilot survey and the full Time Use Survey in 1992.

### **User requirements**

Several submissions were received requesting data on unpaid work in the home (including child care, care of the aged and infirm) and unpaid voluntary activities.

Data on unpaid work identify a significant area of human activity not usually monitored in more traditional social and economic statistics. Information on unpaid activities is important in measuring the characteristics of groups with special needs (the elderly, children, the handicapped and those who care for them), and assisting in planning for both work and non-work environments.

### **Non-Census data available**

The recently released Time Use Survey already represents a major step by the ABS in defining and measuring such activities. The ABS intends to repeat the Survey every five years. Additional information has been collected in some ABS State Supplementary Surveys and in surveys on Disability and Ageing. Labour Force surveys already identify the usual major activity of persons not in the labour force.

### **Assessment**

Extensive testing was conducted in three phases on "Usual major activity" in 1983. Several major concerns emerged. Many respondents identified themselves as having two usual major activities. This was common where people combined both home duties or study *and* part-time employment. Non-response was quite high (between 7 and 16%) depending on the form of questions used. In addition, confusion between employed persons who are "unpaid helpers" and persons doing unpaid housework (who are not in the labour force) could seriously undermine the quality of labour force data in the Population Census and should therefore be avoided.

Research by academics suggests that "...the diary instrument that records the chronology of various time uses over the day is the only valid measurement of time use, and less expensive substitutes are of substantially lower quality and give systematic biases of a major sort." (Juster, F. T. and Stafford, F. P. "The allocation of time: Empirical Findings, Behavioural Models and Problems of Measurement" *Journal of Economic Literature* 1991). Future Time Use Surveys will continue to use the diary collection method.

Questions on unpaid activity will not be included in the 1996 Census.



**OTHER TOPICS****Reason Dwelling Unoccupied****Year first married****Whether married more than once**

These three topics were not included in the 1991 Census and were also recommended for exclusion in the 1996 Ccnsus. They were excluded on the grounds of limited demand or usefulness, the existence of alternative (administrative) sources and data quality problems. Given the lack of compelling arguments for the re-introduction of these topics - and the need to limit respondent load and cost - they will not be included in the 1996 Census.

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**APPENDIX 1****RELEASE STATUS OF TOPICS**(See Page 7 for timing of release)First Release

Sex  
 Age  
 Marital status  
 Usual residence at Census time  
 Religion  
 Citizenship  
 Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander origin  
 Country of birth  
 Year of Arrival  
 Country of birth of parents  
 Language spoken at home/proficiency in English  
 Attendance at an educational institution  
 Age left school  
 Issue (number of children ever born)  
 Income (individual)  
 Motor vehicles (number garaged)  
 Number of bedrooms  
 Structure of private dwelling (classification)  
 Location of private dwelling (classification)  
 Non-private dwelling and caravan park (classification)

Second Release

Family relationship  
 Internal migration (Address of usual residence 1 year ago and 5 years ago)  
 Education qualifications  
 Labour force status  
 Occupation  
 Industry  
 Hours worked  
 Journey to work  
 Mode of travel to work  
 Income (family, household)  
 Nature of occupancy (type of tenure)  
 Rent  
 Housing loan repayments







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